

Helping the Non-Compliant Child

Brief Program Description

Helping the Noncompliant Child is a parent skills-training program aimed at teaching parents how to obtain compliance in their children to reduce conduct problems and prevent subsequent juvenile delinquency. The program, designed for parents and their 3- to 8-year-old children, is based on the theoretical assumption that noncompliance in children is a keystone behavior for the development of conduct problems, and faulty parent-child interactions play a significant part in the development and maintenance of these problems.

Parents attend sessions with their children, and trainers teach the parents skills necessary for increasing compliance in their children. The intervention generally takes place in a therapeutic playroom and parents learn skills through instructions, modeling, role-playing, and practice with their child. The number of sessions delivered ranges from 5 to 15, and sessions are attended one or two times per week for 60 to 90 minutes. Parents report on their own behavior and the behavior of their children, and program staff observe parent and child behavior.

The program has been shown to be effective in changing parent and child behavior. Changes have generalized across time (15 years of followup data), settings (clinic to home), siblings, and behaviors (changes in behaviors other than noncompliance). Parent attitudes about their child also change.

Program Development Support

The National Institute of Mental Health provided support for the research to develop and evaluate the Helping the Noncompliant Child program. Mark W. Roberts, Ph.D., Karen C. Wells, Ph.D., and Nicholas Long, Ph.D., have played, and continue to play, important roles in the evolution of the program.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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